Dear Rochelle Zurnamer,

You're receiving this email because you've been interested in *The Australian Code of Practice on Disinformation and Misinformation,* and we wanted to ensure that you were informed about key developments.

Today DIGI is publishing the eight signatories' next set of transparency reports under the code, releasing new insights and data into their management of mis- and disinformation in Australia.

They have been released today one year after the first set of reports were published, and cover data from the 2021 calendar year.

As part of improvements made by DIGI to the reporting process, all reports have been reviewed by an independent expert Hal Crawford, who also developed best practice guidelines to guide signatories.

On the release of the reports, Hal Crawford said: *"This year's transparency reports represent the next step in an iterative process that began with last year's inaugural reports. In broad terms, the 2021 reports provide substantial and detailed information on dis/misinformation countermeasures, policy and processes."*

The 2021 transparency reports provide new data on misinformation in Australia including on the volume of misinformation takedowns in Australia. For example:

- In the first six months of 2021, there were 147 500 misinformation content violations removed globally by **LinkedIn,** less than 2% of which were from Australia.
- A monthly breakdown of Australian medical misinformation videos removed from **TikTok** over the course of 2021 saw numbers increase and trend with contextual factors such as the arrival of the Delta strain and the vaccination rollout.
- Over 5000 **YouTube** videos uploaded from IP addresses in Australia were removed for having content related to dangerous or misleading COVID-19 information, and over 700 000 such videos were removed globally.

The reports illustrate efforts to elevate reputable content and provide users with information to counter misinformation. For example:

- **Apple News** created a COVID hub for critical official information in Australia – including a state-by-state breakdown of COVID restrictions, case numbers and ABC content – which was visited by more than 50,000 readers per day and 1.41 million in total.
- In 2021, **Adobe** introduced "Content Credentials" to Photoshop to allow users to disclose and assess the attribution of digital content, to provide clearer content ownership for creators and increased content transparency for viewers across the internet.

The reports detail the nature and effectiveness of interventions to counter misinformation. For example:

- In Australia, **Meta** partners with fact-checking organisations such as the Australian Associated Press, Agence France Presse and RMIT FactLab and applies a warning label to content they rate as false. When people see these warning labels, 95% of the time they do not proceed with viewing the original content.
- As one of its efforts to slow the spread of misinformation, **Twitter** added a new prompt when people retweet an article that they haven't opened on Twitter, where they are encouraged to read it. People open articles 40% more often after seeing the "read before retweeting" prompt.
- Online marketplace **Redbubble** has repurposed its fraud detection software to proactively users who upload trending content that perpetuates misinformation.

The code drives greater transparency and public accountability around tech efforts to address harmful misinformation, and DIGI looks forward to working with the incoming Government and many of you in our efforts to maximise its effectiveness.

Best regards,

Sunita Bose
Managing Director, DIGI

READ THE 2021 TRANSPARENCY REPORTS

Background

The first set of transparency reports under *The Australian Code of Practice on Disinformation and Misinformation* were released on May 22, 2021 and provided a baseline snapshot of signatories' efforts under the code.

The second set of reports, and reports going forward, have a defined calendar year reporting period and require data from 2021. **The 2021 reports therefore do not cover data from the May 2022 Federal Election**, though some signatories have included general information about their responses to it and 2022 events such as the war in Ukraine.

The Australian Code of Practice on Disinformation and Misinformation was developed in response to policy announced in December 2019, in response to the ACCC Digital Platforms Inquiry, where the digital industry was asked to develop a voluntary code of practice on disinformation. DIGI developed the code with assistance from the University of Technology Sydney's Centre for Media Transition, and First Draft, a global organisation that specialises in helping societies overcome false and misleading information.

Mandatory code commitments include publishing & implementing policies on misinformation and disinformation,

providing users with a way to report content against those policies and implementing a range of scalable measures that reduce its spread & visibility (Mandatory commitment #1). Every signatory has agreed to annual transparency reports about those efforts to improve understanding of both the management and scale of mis- and disinformation in Australia (Mandatory commitment #7).

Additionally, there are a series of widely adopted opt-in commitments that platforms select if relevant to their business model: (Commitment #2) Addressing disinformation in paid content; (#3) addressing fake bots and accounts; (#4) transparency about source of content in news and factual information (e.g. promotion of media literacy, partnerships with fact-checkers) and (#5) political advertising; and (#6) partnering with universities/researchers to improve understanding of mis and disinformation.

DIGI is a non-profit industry association that advocates for a thriving Australian digitally-enabled economy that fosters innovation, a growing selection of digital products and services, and where online safety and privacy are protected.

Digital Industry Group Inc. (DIGI)

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